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SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR EDWARDS AND COVINGTON TO TRAVEL TO SAINT LUCIA

REF: STATE 159487

¶1. Embassy Bridgetown welcomes and grants country clearance to Michael Edwards, Director of IT Infrastructure, and Eric Covington, Lead IT Specialist to travel to St. Lucia from October 22-27, 2006. The purpose of this visit is to consult with Peace Corps staff to gather requirements for future IT enhancements.

¶2. Post understands that Peace Corps Eastern Caribbean based in St. Lucia will arrange for Mr. Edwards's and Mr. Covington's travel and logistical support.

¶3. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Covington are scheduled to arrive via Air Jamaica flight #93 at 6:00PM.

¶4. Entry requirements: A valid U.S. passport is required to enter Saint Lucia. No visa is required if your stay is under six months, including those travelers arriving with diplomatic or official passports. For further information, travelers may contact the Embassy of Saint Lucia, 3216 New Mexico Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016, telephone (202) 364-6792.

¶5. Departure tax for St. Lucia is XCD\$45.00 or USD\$17.00.

¶6. The following is general information pertaining to transportation, security, and health considerations throughout the Eastern Caribbean:

#### Airports and Transportation

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Eastern Caribbean nations are visitor friendly and do not require visas for U.S. citizens traveling on valid U.S. passports with return tickets. Commercial taxis are readily available and reasonably priced at airports throughout the region.

#### Security

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In the Eastern Caribbean, foot travel outside of well-established tourist areas is not generally recommended, especially at night. Be vigilant when using public telephones or ATM machines near roadsides or quiet areas. As in many U.S. metropolitan areas, wearing expensive jewelry, carrying expensive objects, or carrying large amounts of cash should be avoided. Visitors should also safeguard valuables while at the beach. While hotels are generally safe, many visitors have experienced loss of unattended items. Hotel burglaries are not uncommon and all valuables should be locked in room safes if possible.

#### Health Information

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Throughout the Eastern Caribbean, the most likely threat to a visitor's health is sunburn. It takes several weeks to become accustomed to the heat and humidity. Prolonged exposure to the sun, without protection, causes sunburn and may ultimately result in sun-damaged skin or even skin cancer. Sunscreens should be used for protection. In Barbados, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent the major

health threat is dengue fever, transmitted by mosquito. Dengue cases are most often seen in the summer months. Persons should therefore protect themselves with insect repellent. There is also a growing number of HIV/AIDS cases reported. The Eastern Caribbean enjoys clean and safe drinking water. Only routine boosters for immunizations (i.e., tetanus, diphtheria, and oral polio vaccine) are required when traveling to this region. Barbados has the best medical facilities of all the islands in the region and most of the medical specialties have practitioners here.

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